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RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 7136
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 4393
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1676
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 1678
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 3890
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 4307
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 8864
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SUBJECT: NATIONAL ELECTORAL COURT READY FOR JULY 2

Classified By: Amb. David N. Greenlee for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Acting Ecopol Chief met with National Electoral Court (CNE) President Salvador Romero on June 28 regarding the Court's preparations for the July 2 Constituent Assembly elections, which Romero says are almost complete. The CNE has set up a new system which voters can use to confirm (by cell phone or internet) that they are on the voting lists before their arrival at polling stations on July 2. He said the system should reduce protests due to voters turned away on election day. Romero also said the police do not anticipate any conflicts or unrest. In December, the police informed the Court of possible conflicts throughout Bolivia; this time there are no such reports. Romero attributed the calm atmosphere surrounding the elections to voter apathy and political parties' lack of financial resources.

¶2. (C) Polls will be open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on July 2; all persons in line by 4 p.m. will be allowed to vote. Romero confirmed that several organizations will field elections observers, including the OAS (approximately 35), the European Union (around 80), electoral courts from the region (around 25), and a local NGO network (up to 3,000 observers) indirectly supported by USAID. In the absence of voting irregularities, Romero estimated the CNE should have 90 percent of results certified by July 6 or 7. In the case of irregularities, voting will be repeated for the affected voting centers on July 16. As in December, results will be posted on the CNE's website, www.cne.org.bo, as they come in.

¶3. (C) Romero said holding two national elections in such close proximity, while taxing for the Court, allowed them to immediately implement "lessons learned" from December, thus creating a smoother process. Romero was relieved to report that executive pressure on the Court has decreased in the past two weeks, but said he expects it to resume following the election, depending on results.

GREENLEE